

City of Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee

September 14, 2006 Meeting – Minutes taken by Cornelia Herzfeld

Members Attending: Cornelia Herzfeld, Cambridge resident; Judy Nathans, Cambridge resident; Adam Mitchell, Save That Stuff; Debbie Sorocco, MIT; Robert Winters, Cambridge resident.

Guests Attending: Kelly Dunn, Recycling Program Manager; Randi Mail, Recycling Director

Market Update

Shauna Schiller of FCR was unable to attend but had sent a report to Randi. Prices continued strong in all categories except plastic, which was descending from a historic high earlier in the year.

Randi reported that the MBTA set up dumpsters for mixed paper recycling at the Lechmere, Alewife and Kendall T stops. The dumpsters will be collected by Abitibi (www.paperretriever.com), a company that pays the generator based on tons collected with no fees for pickup or dumpster rental. However, cardboard and phonebooks are not accepted in these bins.

The city is finalizing a contract for scrap metal recycling with Schnitzer Northeast, (formerly New England Metal) based in Everett. She discovered that the City could get very competitive pricing without joining the [Northeast Resource Recovery Association](#). Revenue will be based on volume and whether the load is segregated or mixed. A 30 cubic yard dumpster for scrap metal will be placed at the Recycling Drop-off Center this fall. DPW also built a new ramp and stairs between the roll-offs for paper and commingles, made of plastic lumber from recycled plastic bags.

DEP Compost Grant Update

Randi announced that the City hired John Connolly as the project consultant to work with Save that Stuff to market, recruit and train businesses for compost collection. John continues to be very involved with the state's Supermarket Organics Recycling Program, [more info](#).

Randi, John and Adam had an information table at this year's Taste of Cambridge event, held in July. It was a great opportunity to talk to over 50 participating restaurants and distribute the [brochure](#). John continues to report that he is being very well received by Cambridge businesses and is finding that businesses are excited about this opportunity.

[Click here](#) to view Randi's Interim Report on the project. About 30 businesses have already signed up, including such establishments as the Museum of Science, Whole Foods, Royal Sonesta Hotel, McDonalds in Central Square and the Harvest Co-op. Collection will begin in late September and the ultimate goal of the projects is pickup 10-15 tons/day, 5-6 days/week. Depending on the volume of material generated, customers will choose the frequency of collection, with large generators receiving daily collection.

Save That Stuff will rent customers 68-gallon toters for \$3/month. It will be \$100/ton for pickup, which has roughly been a 10% savings for customers compared with trash disposal costs. There are bilingual [training posters](#) and the toters will have a list of what is accepted hot stamped on the lid with pictures. Randi believes that more and more businesses will sign up for this service due to the cost savings and customer pressure.

The DEP is very supportive of the project and believes it would be replicable for other haulers and communities. They are actively working to stimulate new and expanded facilities to accept and process organics. Adam said that they would take the material to Rocky Hill Farm in Saugus.

In fall 2007, this program will be offered to the Cambridge public schools participating in CitySprouts (Morse, Haggerty, Peabody, King Open and King Amigos). Randi and Kelly will be meeting with principals this fall to discuss the opportunity.

Big Building (BB) Update

Kelly reported that in FY06, she reevaluated all large residential buildings with 13+ units regarding their recycling status. Based on monitoring the recycling setout at each BB for 3-5 weeks, she assigned an "A, B or C" status to the level of recycling, based on pounds recycled per unit per week:

A = 20+ lbs/wk/HH

B = 10-20lbs/wk/HH

C = less than 10lb/wk/HH

This was an incredible effort and long overdue (the last statuses were assigned in 2002). In October/November, each BB will receive a letter informing the property manager of their recycling "grade". The letters will be accompanied by a full color [simple recycling flyer](#) (with translations) to give to each of the residents in that given building.

During the "Put a Lid on Trash" education campaign, DPW and ISD organized two meetings inviting all property managers to learn more about the Ordinance changes and the new requirements. These were a great opportunity and the May meeting had an impressive turnout. Kelly made a presentation at that meeting about recycling. Among many resources available from DPW, Kelly offered buildings [laminated recycling posters](#) to hang where their toters are stored.

If it Rips, Recycle It!

To continue the emphasis that Cambridge can recycle a lot more paper and cardboard, Randi developed a poster and postcard with the simple message "If it rips, recycle it". [Posters](#) are being placed in business

windows, city buildings, libraries, schools, parks, etc. [Postcards](#) will be sent citywide in October and Randi is working to publicize this message extensively. Please let her know if you want to help [get the word out](#)! Robert suggested that the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood signs might be used for this campaign.

Random Tidbits

- Randi reported that Tom had been issuing about dozens of warnings a day on trash violations and has begun issuing citations for repeat and non-responsive offenders.
- Robert said that some old public recycling bins were full of trash. Randi said that the new public area bins were working very well in Porter and Central Square and more will be installed in Harvard Square, part of the current reconstruction project. She indicated that DPW will remove the old bins, which are missing lids.
- Randi reported that she submitted a MassDEP grant to acquire [mesh recycling bins](#) for 7 parks. This grant application also included requests for fifty \$10 discounts on [rain barrels](#) (to be sold to the public as part of DPW's storm water management program, assistance developing a School Chemical Management plan and diesel retrofits for the rest of the school bus fleet.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30.